

# **Silver Spring Citizens Advisory Board Meeting Minutes**

## **March 8, 2010**

**Members:** Darian Unger, Mark Woodard, Constance Wynn, Phil Olivetti, Marilyn Seitz, Jessica Fusillo, Evan Glass, Victor Weissberg, Kathy Stevens, Mitch Warren, Tiffany Graham-Golden

**Members Absent:** Casey Anderson, and Mary Pat Spon

**Call to Order and Introduction:** Darian Unger called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

### **Community Comments:**

Bob Colvin distributed East Silver Spring Citizens' Association, Inc. (ESSCA) newsletter.

Marcie Stickle announced the extend Black History Month Exhibit at the Gwendolyn Coffield Center.

### **Chair's Report**

Darian Unger reported that:

- Impact Silver Spring held a successful event about envisioning public space in Silver Spring. I spoke with Councilmember Ervin and received an update on the Metropolitan Branch Trail she is asking DOT questions and would like a status update on several aspects of the trail. Councilmember Ervin was quoted in the paper as to being uncertain about ambulance fees and she informed me that this was not the case and she is maintaining her opposition to ambulance fees on moral grounds.
- Councilmember Trachtenberg is on the agenda and will discuss several County issues.
- Thanks to the SSCAB Nominating Committee for interviewing the 31 people that applied.

### **Directors Reports**

Reemberto Rodriguez reported that the Director Report is on page 3 and 4 of the packet and that he would be happy to answer any questions.

- Please fill out your Census form it is vitally important that we all be counted.
- The most critical issue is that given the severity of the budget situation and the potential impact on the Regional Center we are convening a work session of all advisory groups on Tuesday, March 16 at 6:30 p.m., at the Round House Educational Center. The session is the day after the County Executive releases his recommended budget. Discussion at the session will be on what we know; identifying outstanding questions; and strategizing next steps.

### **County Budget Discussion**

Councilmember Duchy Trachtenberg reported that:

- We are in the process of tactically the \$761 million dollar budget deficit that County Executive will submit to Council on March 15. The \$761 million dollars is the actual budget

gap that will have been closed at submission of the Executive budget. This declining revenue is around personal income, home sales, refinances and recordation taxes being down. There has been a flight of millionaires moving out of Montgomery County. Clearly the deficit means there are hard choices to be made in the Executive budget. The County Executive's three priorities over the last few years have been education, public safety and ensuring we maintain services for the vulnerable and I think he will continue in this manner and so will Council. This does not mean what the County Executive submits is what Council will sign off on in May.

- We made significant cuts recently with the \$70 million dollar savings plans by making cuts to library services, recreation programming and bus routes but at the end what was originally proposed was revised by Council. We are not at the point where discussion is around cost of living increase and steps but how to maintain reasonable services for those we represent and saving as many jobs as possible which are my two primary objectives and I think the majority of my colleagues feel the same way. This budget situation is going to be a rough ride but what is important to me and other colleagues is hearing what the community has to say about the proposals that are made in the budget.
- The Fillmore is seen as being critical to the redevelopment of Silver Spring.
- The Silver Spring Library is a real resource for downtown Silver Spring but issues did arise concerning the pedestrian bridge. Council did not support the bridge last summer but the County Executive did indicate he wants a contingency available in case people change their minds.
- The Sligo Creek Golf course has been important to many and we are grateful for the work done by the community on the task force. I believe I am in the majority of Council members that support the private sector option as perhaps being a viable alternative.
- We are all anticipating the Silver Spring Civic Building and should be proud of it. It is obviously a monument with recognition of our Veterans and given the Amory was demolished the Civic Building has extreme importance to the community.
- I support the Purple Line because it is about the future and it is vital to have that connection between the east and west parts of the County and we have made substantial progress with the State.
- I support the Old Blair Auditorium and signed a letter that went to the State House around the state bond bill for the auditorium and hope in the proposed CIP that we will be able to find a way to put the auditorium back in.
- Please complete your census form it is essential for us to receive adequate federal funding and this is also important as we continue to grow our demographic changes but when we think about all the needs that exist around schools, transportation and healthcare and much of that is driven by federal policy it is vital and important that everyone participate in the census. My door is always opened to the community.

- **Fillmore update and discussion**

Bruce Lee, President, Lee Development Group and other representative gave a presentation and overview as follows:

- The agreement with Montgomery County has been signed on November 12, 2009. Design meeting started on December 4, 2009 and meeting are held every Friday.
- The team consist of Davis Construction, State of Maryland and funding from the State, Montgomery County, Department Economic Development and Live Nation, who signed

the lease with the County, Lee Development Group, Holland and Knight, legal team and Hickock Cole Architects and Rodgers Consulting is working on civil engineering to make sure the Fillmore fits.

- Lee Development does not currently have a project but the County approached us and asked if we would be willing to donate very valuable land in exchange for development rights in the future and we worked it out.
- Parking is surrounding the Fillmore within a block to block and half radius in addition the metro is close. The number of parking spaces is approximately 8,000 all within a circle around the Fillmore.
- The goal is to build the Fillmore in a short period of time with a very aggressive schedule. The Ground breaking requirements for Live Nation is October 2010 with ten to twelve months for construction and we are working toward a September 2011 opening. Lee Development Group is the developer of the site, County and State funding are in place and at time of completion of the building we will turn the keys over to the County and they will turn over the operations to Live Nation although it will take time to work out a scheduling. The footprint itself is in the range of 10,000 to 11,000 square feet and as of now the parking lot comes up to the back of the front façade. In terms of our project Lee Development does not have a project and do not plan on breaking ground on our portion of the property because the market is not good and we are going to wait until the market comes back but in order to move forward and do a backward project with public amenities and use space comes long before a project and we donate the land we have to go through a process with the County and this is one project for the entire site.
- Potentially the property could layout with two buildings with an office component facing Georgia Avenue frontage, potentially a hotel or residential facing Fenton Street. After all the work and civil engineering the good news is it all works.
- The plan is to submit in March the Optional Method and Preliminary Plan Subdivision and this will be an expedited schedule. Once the formal application is filed it will be an expansion of the presentation you have seen. Later in the spring we will file the site plan application for the Fillmore and Lee Development Project and those will go to the Board later this year this is a little bit of overlapping of the processes to try and make up time we have lost up until now and to meet the schedule for the Fillmore to be opened. We are only building the Fillmore but will have the application approved for the entire project because there are implications for the parking lot portion in terms of loading and access etc., that are necessary to be a part of the application but again the only part being built is the Fillmore because at this time there is not a project or tenant for the other portions of the project. We would like to encourage your continued support for the Fillmore project.

## **Committee Reports**

### **CED Committee**

Phil Olivetti reported that:

- Met with Mr. Kronenberg, Park and Planning and discussed the amenities fund which is building in Silver Spring contribute to a fund rather than putting into their public amenity and there is money in the fund substantial enough that they are looking for projects to invest the money in. Issue that came up to the Planning Board is you have the money will it be publicized to the community letting them know how much money is there, how much money is drawn down from the account. Apparently NOAA had a bond years ago

and there is money out there just sitting and Mr. Kronenberg indicated that the Planning Board had the intention of putting the information on the website for the public to see where the money is and he asked if the Board and Committee had ideas for where the money should be spent.

- Follow-up discussion on several projects we worked on. After we heard the Falkland presentation a decision was made for the Committee to place further discussion on hold. Discussion was held on the Baptist Church proposal which seems to be moving forward quickly and discussion was held about during a type of forum bringing together Park and Planning, the Developer, Church and other stakeholders.

***The CED Committee will not meet on Wednesday March 17.***

### **Transportation and Pedestrian Safety Committee Meeting**

Darian Unger reported that:

- Follow-up with SHA and DOT representatives to try and get full aware of issues we have been discussing. The fact we are an urban area and SHA is not use to dealing with this type of thing in the way we have been emphasizing
- Report from Sgt. Tom Harmon, Traffic Squad and there where five more pedestrian fatalities in the last year and no change from the previous year. We are trying to concentrate on based on the big meeting was that it is not just about the fatalities so we are working together to create an actual map so we can actually map every single incident to use as proof for SHA and DOT to actually start making specific improvements.
- Discussion of snow removals some agreed it was great and others not satisfied. Regional Center and Urban District where attentive to local needs.
- Neighborhoods Committee has not met in two months but we will and Casey Anderson is working on it.
- Everyone's attendant and participation is important as the Board goes through transition and we will have two new Committee Chairs.
- Thanks again to the Nominating Committee for the work they have done over the last couple of weeks.
- I sent an e-mail to Board members regarding same sex marriage and came up on the State level when the Attorney General basically recognized same sex marriage in Maryland that where performed in other states. I talk with several Board members as to whether we should weigh in on this issue and many where supportive of the idea and other where wondering whether this is a State issue we would normally take action on and if we should get more community input on it. I am requesting Committee Chairs to bring this up at Committee meetings for discussion.
- ***April, May, and June SSCAB meetings will be 7:00 p.m. at the Silver Spring Library, 8901 Colesville Road.***

**9:00 p.m. - Meeting adjourned**

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